

PPE, that employee must receive retraining. Other situations that require additional training or retraining of employees include the following circumstances: changes in the workplace or in the type of required PPE that make prior training obsolete.

Payment for Personal Protective Equipment

On Nov. 15, 2007, OSHA promulgated a final rule titled “Employer Payment for Personal Protective Equipment.” This final rule applies to all industry groups (29 CFR Parts 1910, 1915, 1917, 1918, and 1926). In this rulemaking, OSHA is requiring employers to pay for personal protective equipment where the use of the PPE is required to protect the employee from a work-related hazard. The final rule includes several exceptions for certain items specified in the standard. NCDOL adopted these rules verbatim with the same effective date and payment requirement date as OSHA.

Eye and Face Protection

Employees can be exposed to a large number of hazards that pose danger to their eyes and face. NCDOL requires employers to ensure that employees have appropriate eye or face protection if they are exposed to eye or face hazards from flying particles, molten metal, liquid chemicals, acids or caustic liquids, chemical gases or vapors, potentially infectious material, or potentially harmful light radiation.

Many occupational eye injuries occur because workers are not wearing any eye protection, while others result from wearing improper or poorly fitting eye protection. Employers must be sure that their employees wear appropriate eye and face protection and that the selected form of protection is appropriate to the work being performed and properly fits each worker exposed to the hazard.

Prescription Lenses

Everyday use of prescription corrective lenses will not provide adequate protection against most occupational eye and face hazards, so employers must make sure that employees with corrective lenses either wear eye protection that incorporates the prescription into the design or wear additional eye protection over their prescription lenses. It is important to ensure that the protective eyewear does not disturb the proper positioning of the prescription lenses so that the employee’s vision will not be inhibited or limited. Also, employees who wear contact lenses must wear eye or face PPE when working in hazardous conditions.

Eye Protection for Exposed Workers

NCDOL suggests that eye protection be routinely considered for use by carpenters, electricians, machinists, mechanics, millwrights, plumbers and pipe fitters, sheet metal workers and tinsmiths, assemblers, sanders, grinding machine operators, sawyers, welders, laborers, chemical process operators and handlers, and timber cutting and logging workers. Employers of workers in other job categories should decide whether there is a need for eye and face PPE through a hazard assessment.

Examples of potential eye or face injuries include:

- Dust, dirt, metal or wood chips entering the eye from activities such as chipping, grinding, sawing, hammering, the use of power tools or even strong wind forces.
- Chemical splashes, mists and vapors from corrosive substances, hot liquids, solvents or other hazardous solutions contacting the eye from activities such as degreasing and electroplating.
- Objects swinging into the eye or face, such as tree limbs, chains, tools or ropes.
- Radiant energy from welding, harmful rays from the use of lasers or other radiant light (as well as heat, glare, sparks, splash and flying particles).